

**GENERIC NAME:**

**DIPHENHYDRAMINE HCl**

112.10

**BRAND NAME:** Benadryl

**CLASS:** antihistamine; anticholinergic

Mechanism of Action:

Blocks cellular histamine receptors, but does not prevent histamine release; results in decreased capillary permeability and decreased vasodilation, as well as prevention of bronchospasm. Has some anticholinergic effects.

Indications and Field Use:

Anaphylaxis (2nd line)  
Phenothiazine reactions (extrapyramidal symptoms)  
Antiemetic

Contraindications:

Known hypersensitivity to diphenhydramine or drugs of similar chemical structure.  
Newborn or premature infants; nursing mothers.  
Considerable caution in patients with glaucoma, acute narrow angle; stenosing or obstructive diseases of the GI tract; bronchial asthma; hyperthyroidism; cardiovascular disease or hypertension; age greater than 60 years (all relative benefit vs risk).

Adverse Reactions:

**CV:** Hypotension; palpitations; arrhythmias; hemolytic anemia.  
**Resp:** Anaphylaxis; thickening of bronchial secretions, tightness in chest; wheezing; nasal stuffiness.  
**CNS:** Sedation; visual disturbances; seizures.  
**GU/GI:** Urinary frequency or retention; vomiting.  
**Children:** In children, may cause paradoxical CNS excitation, seizures, palpitations, thickening of bronchial secretions.

**NOTES ON ADMINISTRATION**

Incompatibilities/Drug Interactions:

Additive effects with alcohol and other CNS depressants (hypnotics, sedatives, tranquilizers, etc.).  
MAO inhibitors prolong and intensify anticholinergic (drying) effects.

Adult Dosage:

**Anaphylaxis:** 25-50 mg slow IV push or deep IM.  
**Extrapyramidal symptoms and antiemetic:** 10-50 mg IV or deep IM, dose should be individualized according to the needs and patient response.

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### Pediatric Dosage:

1.0 -1.25 mg/kg slow IV push  
May also be given deep IM

### Routes of Administration:

IV, Deep IM

### Onset of Action:

IV 5 - 10 minutes

### Peak Effects:

1 hour

### Duration of Action:

3-6 hours

### Dosage Forms/Packaging:

50 mg/1 ml syringes and vials

### Arizona Drug Box Supply Range:

PARAMEDIC:	1 - 2 units
INTERMEDIATE:	1 - 2 units

### Special Notes:

- > Not used in newborn or premature infants; used in pregnancy only if clearly needed.
- > In anaphylaxis, used as a 2nd line treatment after epinephrine and steroids.